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THE NEW ROUTE TO CHINA.
The following letter, dated Milan Nov. 2, appears in the London Morning Herald:—
Sir,—I have just seen your article on the proposed land communication between India and China, and am compelled to confess that I think it right to draw your attention to what appears to be to be a misapprehension in your view of a route through Assam and the Brahmapootra Valley. You doubt its suitability for the trade from the Bay of Bengal, and give the preference to that through Burma. Permit me to point out that there is already regular steam communication from the Bay of Bengal to Diobroogur, near the head of the Assam Valley and therefore to within 500 miles of Ping-shaw, the point reached by Captain Blakiston on the Yang-tse-Kiang; and that if this 500 miles (300 of which are known) should be found practicable for a road or railroad, the terminus on the China side would be in the most fertile and populous province of Se-chen, and on the great artery of Chinese commerce, the Yang-tse-Kiang. I have myself gone to Sudday, 50 miles to the east of Diobroogur, having in tow a large barge, on which we there loaded some 200 tons of limestone for the use of the department of public works in Assam, and returned safely.
On the other hand, the route through Burma can at any time, I suppose, be considered available for steamers as far as Ava, which by the map appears to be nearly as far from Yunnan as Sudday is from Se-chen. So far, there may appear to be little to choose between the routes. Nevertheless the difference is—The Burmese route columns in a mountainous, and thinly-populated province, and far from any system of water communication.
Without reference whatever to the interests of the tea planters of Assam—who, by-the-by, could no more afford to employ Chinese labourers than the West Indian planters could afford to employ Europeans—it would be a great mistake if the Brahmapootra route to the Yang-tse-Kiang should not be examined before any more southern line of communication be adopted.—I am, Sir, faithfully yours,
DAVID BROGGS, Lieut. Colonel,
Late Sup. Engineer of Assam.

THE ENGLISH ELECTIONS.
In the course of some anticipatory comments on the probable results of the elections which have terminated so generally satisfactory to the liberal party, the *Spectator* remarks as follows:—
"No such political issue was ever submitted to such a multitude for final decision; and even this is not the greatest to be placed before the people. The new Parliament is not a mere continuance of the old. A revolution has passed over us, a revolution as complete as ever a nation went through; a new dynasty has ascended the throne, and has now to decide what its policy shall be—that of the future or the present, of the eighteenth or the nineteenth century, of movement or stagnation." We are not about to repeat the party-cries of the day. The Tories who see abuses, but neither villains nor fools, neither enemies to their country nor irreconcilable enemies to English freedom. They are a permanent party in the State, when unconfused by momentary delusions—when led by men like themselves and battling out questions they understand; simply content men—who think that the old response "As it was, is now, and ever shall be world without end," contains all political truth, who regret oppression, but only as they regret law; who pity misery, but only as they pity human nature; who see abuses, but fear that change will only breed greater; who think that the existing social order, so pleasant to them, is simply semi-divine; who see in incessant advance only an endless march to a perpetually receding goal, and do not see even if that were true, continual marching trains men as continual lozings never will. If they win we shall have no reaction, no new oppression, no reaction on freedom as it is, no effort to make the privileges of the rich richer or the burdens of the poor heavier than they are. All will simply remain, they who enjoy will enjoy, they who suffer will suffer, the over-laden Titan will stagger on with his burden as of old, under no whip wielded by him to torture him, but also with no wiser offered by them to strengthen him. This election will determine the drift of British policy for years; and if the Tories win, for years Great Britain will remain unaltered—a land ruled by a tolerant feudalism in which all are happy except the multitude, all claims are acknowledged save those of manhood, all rights are respected save those which tend towards equality. A great state will be pronounced "a good thing; and all will be cheap labour; education will be doled out in morsels; highest means of culture will be limited to a creed; combination, the new machine of the poor, will be jealously restricted; the soldier will be debased from epaulettes, the sailor from the chance of a ship, all but the wealth from political power, all but acquiescence from local administrative authority, all alike from experiments in social organisation. The Peer who has disgraced his order will be still suffered to legislate—the cleric who has changed his conviction will still be compelled to preach, that the lawyer will still be ordered to swear that he loves the tyrannical equally with the oppressed; the old régime of privilege and oppression; the old Government be kindly, contented, but quiescent caste will still continue; and the new world, with its free institutions, free careers and free thought, its more diffused prosperity and ease, its aggressive faith in humanity, its active sympathies with poverty, its overweening pity for monotonous toil, cannot be so much as born. If the Tories succeed the present will stand, if the Radicals the future will come.

We regret to record the fatal termination of a sporting adventure in the Salem district of the Madras Presidency. Captain Ford, who served with the Madras Sappers and Miners during the late Campaign in Abyssinia, while out shooting met with a wounded bear. He grappled with the bear, and his *shikaris* in endeavouring to hit the animal mortally wounded his master. Such at least is the version of the story published in Madras, although doubts have been thrown upon its accuracy.
In a mine in the State of New Jersey, which has for thirty-five years past been worked for lead, a natural chemical combination has been discovered not heretofore attainable by any known artificial means, and which is not only suitable as a paint for ironwork of all kinds, but is especially adapted for the coating of ships' bottoms, as the particles of copper in the combination are fatal to animal life.

Insurances.

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